

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5144
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 6356

LIMDIS

COMMERCE FOR BEWT

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EEWT, RO
SUBJECT: JOINT COMMISSION

REF: A) BUCHAREST 6302 B) BUCHAREST 6201 C) STATE 203351

1. WE WISH ALERT WASHINGTON TO INCREASING TEMPO OF GOR REFERENCE TO NEED FOR A MULTI-YEAR REVIEW OF MFN FOR ROMANIA BY US. MULTI-YEAR EXTENSION WILL PROBABLY BE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE THAT DPM PATAN WILL RAISE IN MEETINGS WITH SECRETARY KREPS AND OTHER ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS AND WE BELIEVE IT INEVITABLE THAT GOR COUNTER DRAFT AGENDA WILL HIGHLIGHT MFN ISSUE.

2. MFN WAS, OF COURSE, EMPHASIZED BY THE ROMANIAN SIDE AT THE JULY ECONOMIC COUNCIL MEETING. FIRST GOR OFFICIAL TO RAISE SUBJECT WITH US HERE WAS DEPUTY FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER MARGARITESCU DURING HIS JULY 22-24 MEETINGS WITH DAS REICH. CEAUSESCU MENTIONED SAME THEME IN HIS AUGUST MEETING WITH CODEL EILBERG AND RABBI SCHNEIER. THEN IN AUGUST 18 MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR, PATAN REFERRED TO CEAUSESCU'S INTEREST IN FINDING
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WAY FOR HAVING US EXTEND MFN TO ROMANIA FOR 10-15 YEAR PERIOD OR AT LEAST SOME PERIOD LONGER THAN ONE YEAR. IN SEPARATE MEETINGS ON AUGUST 26 WITH DAS LUERS, BOTH PATAN AND DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER GLIGA REFERRED TO NEED FOR MULTI-YEAR EXTENSION OF MFN. IN THESE AND OTHER MEETINGS, THE AMBASSADOR HAS SHARED WITH GOR OFFICIALS SENSE OF DISCUSSIONS HE HAD WITH ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON AND WITH MEMBERS OF

CONGRESS DURING JULY CONSULTATIONS ON THIS ISSUE. THOSE IN STATE AND COMMERCE DEALING WITH MFN WILL RECALL AMBASSADOR'S ADVOCATING THE NEED IN TERMS OF OUR OWN INTEREST TO START THINKING ABOUT A MULTI-YEAR APPROACH. THIS IS THE ESSENCE WE PRESUME OF MATERIAL PREPARED FOR SECRETARY KREPS (REF C).

3. FROM THESE CONTACTS, IT IS CLEAR THAT WE NEED PREPARE OURSELVES FOR A PERSISTENT GOR EFFORT IN ANY AND ALL GOR-USG CONTACTS TO PRESS ISSUE OF MULTI-YEAR MFN EXTENSION FROM US. WE SHOULD NOT BE DISSUADED BY OBVIOUS GOR INTEREST IN MULTI-YEAR APPROACH FROM LOOKING AT OUR INTERESTS IN THIS MATTER.

4. OUR VIEW IS THAT IN MANY WAYS A MULTI-YEAR APPROACH TO MFN EXTENSION FOR ROMANIA MAKES SENSE FOR THE UYTN GIVEN OUR INTEREST IN CONTINUING THE INVOLVEMENT OF ROMANIA WITH THE WEST AND IN PARTICULAR WITH THE US. IT IS HARD TO PROMOTE LONG-TERM INVOLVEMENT WHEN THE MAIN BASIS FOR IT HAS SO UNCERTAIN AN ELEMENT AS ANNUAL RENEWAL. ADDITIONALLY, FROM TALKS WITH BUSINESSMEN BOTH HERE AND IN THE US (AT THE NEW YORK ECONOMIC COUNCIL MEETING IN JULY), IT APPEARS THAT BILATERAL TRADE AND COOPERATION ACTIVITIES WOULD RECEIVE A MAJOR THRUST FORWARD BY REMOVING FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS PROCESS THE ANNUAL UNCERTAINTY OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MFN. AS DISCUSSED IN OTHER RECENT MESSAGES, MAJOR OBSTACLE IN CONGRESSIONAL THINKING TO MULTI-YEAR EXTENSION IS JEWISH CONFIDENTIAL

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EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL, BUT WE ARE HOPEFUL BEGIN VISIT HAS STARTED A PROCESS OF MAKING THAT ISSUE LESS CONTENTIOUS. THE OTHER MAJOR CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN, OF COURSE, IS HOW TO AMEND JACKSON-VANIK WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING EVENTUAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS. AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED TO JACKSON HIMSELF THAT ONE WAY MIGHT BE TO PROVIDE FOR A TWO-STAGE APPROACH--ANNUAL REVIEW FOR SAY TWO YEARS FOLLOWED BY MULTI-YEAR THEREAFTER, SUBJECT TO ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS OF RETURNING TO THE YEARLY BASIS. AT THIS STAGE, OUR THINKING IS THAT THREE YEARS MAKES THE MOST SENSE BECAUSE IT COINCIDES WITH ALLOWABLE LENGTH OF TRADE AGREEMENT. WE FEEL EARLY 1978 WOULD BE THE TIME TO TRY TO WORK SOMETHING OUT WITH KEY FIGURES IN CONGRESS.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: IT WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR US TO HAVE IN HAND PRELIMINARY WASHINGTON THINKING ON OUTLOOK FOR MULTI-YEAR MFN EXTENSION PRIOR OUR SEPTEMBER 12-13 MEETING WITH PATAN TO DISCUSS UPCOMING JOINT COMMISSION SESSION.
BARNES

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